

SENATE—Tuesday, March 23, 1999

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, Lord of all nations, You have enabled the United States to become the most powerful Nation on Earth. By Your blessings, we are rich in natural resources and human potential. We have achieved military might. Help us to know where and when to use our influence or military intervention for the greatest good. Bless the Senators with great wisdom as they consider their votes today on the nature and extent of our Nation's involvement in the crisis in Kosovo. You have told us that if we ask for guidance, You will help us to know what is both wise and creative. Most of all, Lord, we ask You to heal the historic hatred and ethnic prejudices causing this crisis. In today's vote and in all that is said and done in this Senate, may we accomplish the goal of using power wisely. In the name of our Lord. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, this morning the Senate will resume consideration of the supplemental appropriations bill. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders, or their designees, for debate on the Lott amendment regarding Kosovo.

The Senate will recess from 12:30 until 2:15 p.m. today to allow the weekly party caucuses to meet. Upon reconvening at 2:15, the Senate will proceed to a rollcall vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Lott amendment. Notwithstanding the outcome of the cloture vote, it is still anticipated that the Senate will turn to the consideration of S. Con. Res. 20, the budget resolution.

Therefore, Members should expect rollcall votes throughout Tuesday's session, with the first vote occurring at 2:15 p.m.

I thank my colleagues and I yield the floor.

Mr. GRAMS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Minnesota is recognized.

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to

speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Minnesota is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. GRAMS pertaining to the introduction of S. 679 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAPO). Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume consideration of S. 544, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 544) making emergency supplemental appropriations and rescissions for recovery from natural disasters, and foreign assistance, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Hutchison amendment No. 81, to set forth restrictions on deployment of the United States Armed Forces in Kosovo.

Lott amendment No. 124 (to amendment No. 81), to prohibit the use of funds for military operations in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) unless Congress enacts specific authorization in law for the conduct of those operations.

AMENDMENT NO. 124

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time until 12:30 p.m. shall be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees on the Lott amendment No. 124.

Mr. MURKOWSKI addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska is recognized.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, it appears that we are on the verge of sending American warplanes to bomb Serbian installations in and around Kosovo in an effort to force Yugoslav President Milosevic to accept the terms of a peace agreement that he has, so far, rejected. I stand on the floor of the Senate to express my strong opposition to this policy and warn the Administration that the United States may be blindly heading into a war whose outcome is far from pre-determined.

Mr. President, I believe the President has failed to articulate a rationale to

the American people that can justify an act of war by NATO against Serbia. Nor do I believe that the Administration has demonstrated what vital interest justifies armed intervention.

When the President originally announced his plan to send 4,000 American soldiers to Kosovo as part of a larger NATO force, it was premised on the idea that the troops would be deployed, as in Bosnia, as a peacekeeping force. I had serious concerns about this commitment because it was not clear to me whether American troops would be stationed in Kosovo for a month, for a year, or for a decade. Nor did I believe that it was in our national interest to participate in this operation because I do not believe there is any vital interest of the United States that is at stake in this civil war. And I emphasize "civil war."

Mr. President, the peacekeeping commitment was made several weeks ago. In the intervening period, one thing has happened. There is no peace to keep.

Although the rebels in Kosovo have agreed to the terms of a peace agreement, the Yugoslavian government has rejected the terms of the agreement in part because it rejects the idea of having NATO troops police its sovereign territory in Kosovo.

Having failed to negotiate a peace agreement, the Administration has now changed its strategy. We are fueling up our warplanes, targeting our cruise missiles, and planning to launch air strikes against the Serbs in an effort to force Milosevic to accept the peace agreement. Never mind that the peace agreement he is being asked, or forced, to accept—could allow for the independent future of a province within his country.

Yes, Mr. President, this is an intervention by the United States in a civil war where rebels in one province seek independence. And by choosing to bomb the Serbians, we have directly taken the side of the Kosovo rebels.

Make no mistake, our air strikes against Serbian forces are strongly supported by the Kosovo rebels who have been fighting for independence. And by backing the rebels, the bombing will encourage the independence movement with the prospect that the borders of Kosovo and Albania ultimately will be redrawn along ethnic lines. Is that what our goal is? To break up a country?

Mr. President, American airstrikes are not going to be a cakewalk by any means. We have already been advised of this by our military.